

it should in the long run contribute to reinforce our country's position in the world by creating new channels for our influence, and possibly for our trade.

You will recall the visit which the Prime Minister and I made to President de Gaulle and his ministers in January 1964. I believe that it is not too much to claim that this visit inaugurated a new era in our relations with France. I do not need to review developments since that time, because they have already been the subject of various statements. I should like to stress the importance I attach to the development of these bilateral relations and to mention some more recent steps.

Preliminary economic consultations with France took place in Ottawa in November 18 and 19, and it has been announced that a high level economic mission from both the government and the Canadian business world go to France within the course of the next few months. I am confident that this will help in creating a climate conducive to an expansion of our commercial and financial relations with that country, which have so far been only on a rather modest scale. Last September we had the pleasure of welcoming in Canada a delegation of French members of Parliament and it is now proposed that a delegation of members of Parliament visit France later this year. Permanent connections with their Canadian colleagues were created last September which, with time, should develop into something not unlike the links that have existed for some years with Commonwealth or United States parliamentarians. I have of course already mentioned cultural relations with France.

I have emphasized the variety of our newer contacts with France because it is important that we should not think of the relationship only in cultural terms or only in terms of the natural affinities of French speaking Canadians. We are accustomed to thinking of close relations with Britain and the Commonwealth and with the United States as covering many fields and as